

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Attached hereto are six (6) of corrected drawings that comply with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.84. The corrected drawings incorporate the following drawing changes:

In Fig. 1, the view label "Fig. 1" has been amended such that it is oriented in the same direction as the view itself;

In Figs. 1-4, 6, and 8, cross-hatchings have been provided for elements shown in cross-section;

In Fig. 2, reference numeral "29" has been amended to --29a--;

In Fig. 3, reference numerals "22" and "51" have been amended to --22b-- and --51b-- , respectively;

In Fig. 6, reference numeral --26-- has been added; and

In Fig. 8 reference numerals "22" and "51" have been amended to --22f-- and --51f-- , respectively.

It is respectfully requested that the corrected drawings be approved and made a part of the record of the above-identified application.

REMARKS

Claims 2-4 and 6-16 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 5 have been canceled.  
New claims 13-16 have been added.

Drawings

Drawings have been objected to because of some informalities.

The drawings have been amended, as requested by the Examiner, to overcome these drawing objections.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve these drawing changes and withdraw these drawing objections.

Specification

As requested by the Examiner, the specification has been reviewed and changes have been made to place it in better form for U.S. practice.

Further, the specification has been objected to because of some informalities.

The specification has been amended, as requested by the Examiner, to overcome these objections.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw these objections.

Substitute Specification

The above-noted specification changes are set forth in the attached Substitute Specification. The Substitute Specification does not contain new matter.

A Comparison Specification showing the matter being added to and deleted from the original specification is also submitted herewith.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve the Substitute Specification.

Claim Objections

Claims have been objected to because of some informalities.

Claims have been amended, as suggested by the Examiner, to overcome these objections.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw these objections.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, because of some informalities.

The rejected claims have been amended to overcome these rejections.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw these rejections.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 and 2 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Johnson et al. (USP 3,642,304). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been canceled and substituted with new claim 13. Further, claim 2 has been amended to depend from claim 13.

Johnson discloses an inflator having a housing 14 (corresponds to the “diffuser portion” of the claimed invention of the present application) defining a central cavity 14. A pressurized

gas contained in a reservoir 4 is directing into the cavity 14 through an inlet passage 26 (corresponds to the “first opening” of the claimed invention) via a conduit 12 in a horizontal direction. A wall 40 is provided in the upper horizontal wall of the cavity 14 to prevent fluid connection between the cavity 14 and when the wall 40 is ruptured upon activation of the inflator, the pressurized gas is directed into a conduit 16 through an opening (corresponds to the “gas discharging hole” of the claimed invention) defined by a weakened portion 42 in a vertical direction and into a confinement 6.

In Johnson, however, an imaginary center axis of the opening defined by a weakened portion 42 is not “parallel to an imaginary center axis of the first opening, such that the pressurized gas is discharged in a direction parallel to the longitudinal axial direction of the cylindrical inflator housing.” Accordingly, Johnson fails to disclose or suggest the “diffuser portion” as recited in claim 13.

Claims 2 as well as claims 9-12, variously dependent on claim 13, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 13.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 3, 5, and 7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Storey et al. (USP 5,588,670) and Cuevas et al. (USP 5,593,180). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 5 has been canceled.

Claims 3 and 7, dependent on claim 13, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 13.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 4, 6, and 8 are allowable over the prior art of record if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants, however, believe that claims 4, 6, and 8, as amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 13.

A favorable determination by the Examiner and allowance of these claims is earnestly solicited.

New Claims

In addition to claim 13, new claims 14-16 have been added.

Claims 14-16, variously dependent on claim 13, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 13.

A favorable determination and allowance of these new claims is earnestly solicited.

Conclusion

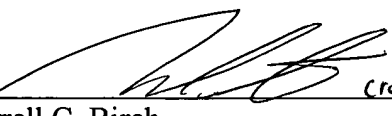
Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and objections, and allowance of the pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Maki Hatsumi (#40,417) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: September 22, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

for By  (reg. #40,417)  
Terrell C. Birch  
Registration No.: 19,382  
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP  
8110 Gatehouse Rd  
Suite 100 East  
P.O. Box 747  
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747  
(703) 205-8000  
Attorney for Applicant

Attachments: Six (6) Replacement Drawing Sheets - Figs. 1-8  
Substitute Specification - 20 pages  
Comparison Specification - 22 pages